India Loco Running Staff Association, New Delhi on reinstatement of dismissed Loco Running staff and other railway workers;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The memorandum demands reinstatement of dismissed loco running staff and for implementation of various judgments of the Central Administrative Tribunals in that regard. 294 staff have already been reinstated as a result of Court orders. 349 staff remain dismissed/removed. Government have decided not to reinstate them. However, court cases filed by some of the 349 staff involve important questions of law and these cases are pending in Supreme Court.

Converting Metre Gauge into Broad Gauge Tracks Throughout the Country

321. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to have only broad gauge tracks throughout the country by converting metre guage tracks in a phased manner;

(b) if so, the present total length of metre gauge tracks in the country;

(c) the allocations made to convert the the metre gauge tracks into broad gauge tracks; and

(d) by when the conversion of metre gauge into broad gauge is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 23,419 kms.

(c) Rs. 559.54 crores in 1992-93.

(d) It will depend on availability of resources in coming years. It is, however, proposed to convert 6000 kms. MG line into BG during the 8th Plan period.

Privatisation in Railways

322. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item captioned "Railways may privatise all services except freight; passenger traffic" what appeared in 'the Economic Times', New Delhi dated the 13th April, 1992;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the manner in which this would improve Railways' operational and financial structure over the present one particularly the transfer of the various manufacturing units to the private sector ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) For the present it has been decided to privatise only the catering services on Indian Railways in phases.

A task force is also going into the question of 'own your wagon scheme' by major railway users.

Action Plan for development of Railway System

323. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have drawn up an action plan for the development of the Railway system; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the funds proposed to be allocated for the same for the 8th Plan period ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Yes, Sir. Every